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09/437,296	11/09/1999	MICHIO YAMAJI	991283	7789

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EXAMINER

DUNWOODY, AARON M

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

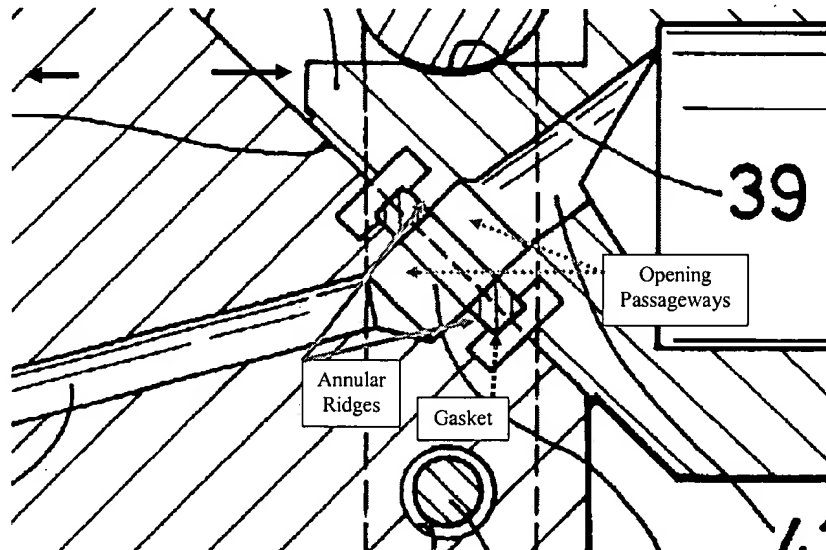
SUPPLEMENTAL EXAMINER'S ANSWER

Responsive to Reply Brief on 11/9/2007, a supplemental Examiner's Answer is set forth below:

Appellant argues neither US patent 5,967,489, Nakazawa et al nor US patent 5,058,935, Eidsmore does not disclose a gasket having an inside diameter less than the diameter of the opening passageway as recited in claim 1. The Examiner disagrees because this claim limitation is met by the combination of US patent 5,967,489, Nakazawa et al and Eidsmore.

Claim 1 states, "herein the gasket has an inside diameter less than the diameter of the opening passageway." The claims does not specify whether the inside diameter is a lot less or a small amount less that the diameter of the opening passageway.

As shown in marked up Figure 2 of Nakazawa et al below, a gasket having an inside diameter equal to the opening passageway is shown.

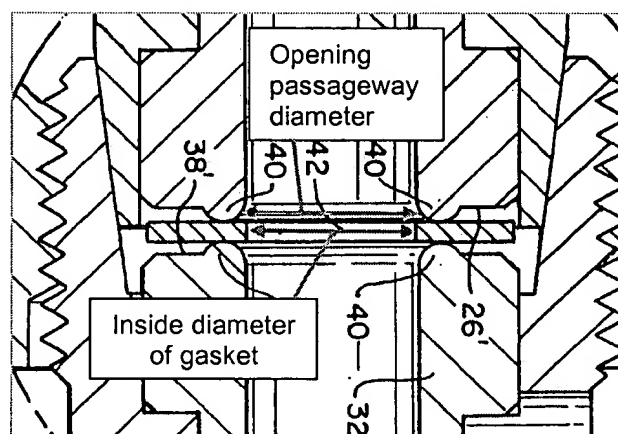


Marked Up Fig. 2 of Nakazawa et al.

Further, Nakazawa et al recites, in column 11:

As will be apparent from FIGS. 2 and 6, when a downward force is applied to the controller extension 9 or 10 from above by the pressing member 22 or 53 in the first to third embodiments, the bottom face 9a or 10a of extension 9 or 10 of the controller 5 is pressed against the butt face 4a, 16a, 36c or 37c or the block 4 or valve 6, 33 or 34 with a great pressure while slightly sliding along the butt face. Thus, the extension 9 or 10 acts like a wedge to give an increased pressure to the seal portion 18 and assure improved fluid tightness.

In Figure 5 below, Eidsmore teaches the gasket holding annular ridges being rounded so as to be in contact with flat, non-inclined faces of the gasket only at its radial midportion.



Marked Up Figure 5 of Eidsmore

Therefore, when the annular ridges of Nakazawa et al. are rounded as in the combination of Nakazawa et al. and Eidsomre and the increased pressure being applied to the gasket (See quotation form column 11 of Nakazawa et al. above.), a

concentrated force is applied to the gasket by the rounded ridges. The concentrated gasket force would cause the gasket to expand radially outward and inward, even if just a slight amount. The radial inward expansion would move the gasket to extend beyond an inside diameter equal to the opening passageway, resulting in an inside diameter less than the opening passageway.


Further, as shown in the Marked Up Figure 5 of Eidsmore above, as the annular ridges are rounded in the combination, the diameter of the opening passageway is larger than the inside diameter of the gasket. Therefore, it is the combination of Nakazawa et al. and Eidsmore discloses a gasket having an inside diameter less than the diameter of the opening passageway.

Appellant may file another reply brief in compliance with 37 CFR 41.41 within two months of the date of mailing of this supplemental examiner's answer. Extensions of time under 37 CFR 1.136(a) are not applicable to this two month time period. See 37 CFR 41.43(b)-(c).

A Technology Center Director or designee has approved this supplemental examiner's answer by signing below:

Donald T. Hajec


APPROVED BY
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